THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

Goodwill Mission to Afghanistan

*534. SHRI KHAN GHUFRAN ZAHIDI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal before Government to send a goodwill mission to Afghanistan to establish people to people contact to rebuild old relations and confidence;

(b) if so, by when; and

(c) whether the mission would be official or unofficial?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) to (c) As part of commitment to strengthen our multifaceted ties with the people and government of Afghanistan, Government of India has maintained active interaction with the Interim Administration of Afghanistan. Several Ministers in the Afghan Interim Administration have visited India. H.E. Mr. Hamid Karzai himself visited India on 26-27 February 2002. Government has also provided extensive humanitarian and other assistance to the Interim Administration of Afghanistan.

Some Indian non-governmental organizations have also expressed keenness to contribute to the reconstruction effort in Afghanistan. Government would encourage all efforts which strengthen people to people relationship, as also contribute to economic and social rehabilitation.

GDP Growth Rate

*535. SHRI NARENDRA MOHAN: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it a fact that GDP growth during the Ninth Five Year Plan period (1997—2002) would be average 5.4 per cent as compared to 6.7 per cent during Eighth Five Year Plan,